



DCF Provider News: A Resource for Wisconsin Shares & YoungStar Providers

EBT Parent Pay Initiative Update

What Child Care Providers Need to Know

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) is proceeding with a new business model for Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy payments. The current practice is to pay providers directly for children who are eligible for Wisconsin Shares and have a current authorization.

The EBT Parent Pay initiative will change how Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy payments are processed and disbursed. Instead of

the state paying providers directly for their services, an EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer) card will be issued to Wisconsin

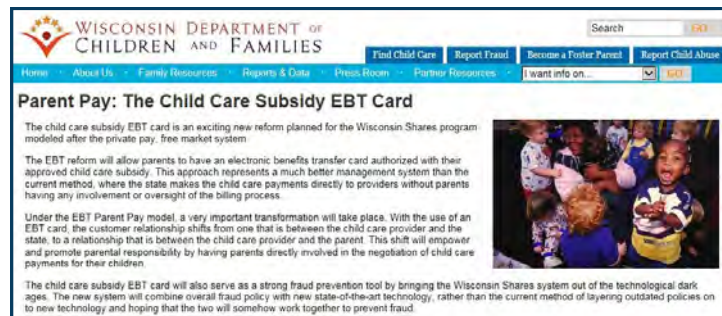
Shares eligible parents. The EBT card will be loaded with benefits for child care services on a monthly basis. The funds will be available on the first day of the month. The EBT card will then be used to initiate payments to child care providers.

DCF has contracted with a private company, Fidelity National Information Services (FIS) to issue and administer the EBT Parent Pay card. FIS is a national leader in the EBT card industry. They are the current contractor for Wisconsin Foodshare EBT cards and have implemented similar child care benefits programs in Kansas and Utah.

DCF is using a phase-based release model. Phase one of the release is scheduled to begin in October of 2016 for the La Crosse area WREA consortia which includes: Buffalo, Clark, Jackson, Monroe, Pepin, Trempealeau, Vernon, and La Crosse counties. Phase two of the release will cover the remainder of the State of Wisconsin and is scheduled for February 2017.

As a Child Care Provider, what should I do to prepare?

1. In order to participate in Wisconsin Shares you must be a YoungStar participant.
2. Several months prior to release,



FIS will send out a contract for Providers. In order to participate in the Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program, Providers must sign the FIS contract and provide the vendor with your banking information. This is necessary to receive the funds which are being transferred via EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer).

3. FIS will provide a training video and DCF will conduct learning sessions and outreach for Providers. It is highly recommended to view the video and attend a session near you.
4. Visit the EBT Parent Pay website for FAQ and the most current information:
http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/subsidy_ebt_card/default.htm.

As a Child Care Provider, how will this new process benefit my child care business?

1. Providers will see their payments quicker and be able to view them online.
2. The EBT Parent Pay system will eliminate the need to submit your attendance reports for Wisconsin Shares reimbursement.
3. Under the EBT Parent Pay system, child care providers will be paid for absence days.

Fall 2015

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Child Care Payment Adjustment Notice Changes



The Rights and Responsibilities, Overpayments, and the Appeal Rights section of the Child Care Payment Adjustment Notice of Decision, used to inform a child care provider of a negative or positive adjustment, has been updated.

Beginning on **June 29, 2015**, the last page of the notice will be separated into the following three (3) text boxes:

- Child Care Provider Responsibilities
- Child Care Provider Overpayments, Recoupments, and Collections
- Child Care Provider Overpayment Appeal Rights

Technical Assistance Memo DECE-BPI-2015-04 describes, in detail, the changes made to this notice. Read the Tech Memo here:
http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/wishares/pdf/tech_memos/2015-04-cc-pmt-adj-notice-changes.pdf

Previously published Tech Memos can be found here:
<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/wishares/techmemo.htm>

Background Information Disclosure Forms



Effective immediately, centers are no longer required to collect a completed Background Information Disclosure (BID) form *annually* from employees. **A completed BID is still required prior to a person starting to work at a center.** Programs are still required to complete a background check within 60 days of a new employee beginning to work with children and annually thereafter.

New household members and new board presidents must still complete a BID form and submit the form to the Department of Children and Families. DCF will continue to run background checks on licensees and adult household members, as well as on minor caregiver employees.

This change does not affect the requirement that an annual background check must be conducted for all caregiver employees. That requirement remains in place.

Questions about background checks can be directed to the Caregiver Background Unit at 608-266-8001 or DCFPlcBECRCBU@wisconsin.gov. You can find more information about Caregiver Background Checks here:
<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/licensed/CBC.HTM>

Announcing the 2016 Draft Evaluation Criteria



The Draft 2016 YoungStar Changes document and the 2016 Draft Evaluation Criteria for all four rating tracks are now posted on the YoungStar website at the following location: <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/point-detail.htm>.

The drafts will be updated at the end of each month and will be in final form at the end of October 2015. Changes for 2016 include moving to a 90-day grace period when staff departure causes a drop in star level.

For 2017, YoungStar will roll out a change that requires programs to be rated every other year, with the option of an annual rating, if requested by the program. If you have any questions, please contact your Local YoungStar Office.
<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/localoffice.htm>

A Wisconsin Survey of Child Care Providers



The Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA) is conducting its next Workforce Study. In early October, 1,500 providers across the state will receive a printed survey in the mail. Please fill out and return the survey promptly.





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Be Strong Families Parent Café Training Institute

On July 22-24, 2015, Race to the Top funded a Parent Café training institute in Madison. The trainers were part of Be Strong Families, an organization in Illinois that promotes the engagement of families. They bring a unique perspective to the Strengthening Families framework and Parent Café delivery. This institute brought together more than 30 early child care professionals and other community partners from across Wisconsin.

The training provided the knowledge and tools:

- To effectively host a parent café in a state-wide implementation initiative
- To create a deeper understanding of the Five Protective Factors
<http://www.icfs.org/pdf/FiveProtectiveFactors.pdf>
- To effectively train and support parents in becoming parent hosts and/or facilitators
- To promote a deeper understanding of parent leadership
- To effectively market and communicate around family engagement

If you are interested in learning more about a Parent Café near you, please contact your Local Child Care Resource and Referral agency.

More than 30 early child care professionals participated in the July Be Strong Families Parent Café training institute held in Madison.

MECA Corner

(Milwaukee County Providers Only)

New Special Needs Workshops

NEW WORKSHOPS from the Special Needs Support Program are scheduled for this fall at the Milwaukee Center for Independence Conference Center. These workshops are a great way to complete continuing education requirements while learning valuable information on including ALL children in care!

MECA also offers **Attendance Reporting**, **Literacy Workshops**, and **CCPI Training Class** sessions for child care providers. These trainings are free and offer continuing education hours. Check out the new class schedule at the link:

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/meca/training.htm>.

Did you know that you can **sign up to be added to the email list** to receive new workshop and class information by email? Go to:

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/meca/snsp/default.htm> and scroll down to the bottom of the page where it says "Sign Up for Information about Training." Enter your email two times and click on "Submit the Request." Once you are added, you will receive new training information and other community resources to help the children in your care.





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Updated Child Care Authorization Notices



Updates have been made to both the Parent and Provider versions of Child Care Authorization Notices. All Authorization Notices issued beginning on June 29, 2015 no longer display the child care provider's price or the parental copayment that has been reduced from the Wisconsin Shares payment. Other important changes to the text include changes to Rights and Responsibilities and Appeal Rights. These changes were introduced in Technical Assistance Memo DECE-BELP-2015-03 which is available at the following link:

http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/wishares/pdf/tech_memos/2015-03-auth-notice-changes.pdf

Previous Technical Assistance Memos may be viewed here: <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/wishares/techmemo.htm>

Updates to the CCPI User Guide for Child Care Providers



The Wisconsin Shares Child Care Provider Information (CCPI) Guide was re-published in August with updated information. The new or edited information is highlighted in yellow.

Please access the updated version on the web link below. It is a recommended practice to save this link as one of your Internet browser favorites, instead of printing a copy of the guide, to be sure you are getting the most updated information.

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/publications/pdf/478.pdf>

Visit dcf.wi.gov
for the latest
Wisconsin Shares updates.

Let T.E.A.C.H. Take You Back to School... and Forward in Your Career

A new school year is beginning. It's the perfect time to consider your educational needs and realize all the financial and emotional support that's available to you as a child care

provider. The support comes through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WISCONSIN scholarship program and it may surprise you to learn all that it includes.



More than 7,000 Wisconsin early childhood teachers have already gained new knowledge and skills with the support of their employer and a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship. We work with you to provide:

- Up to 90% of tuition costs
- Extra money for travel and books
- 15 hours of paid time off so you can study and attend class
- Hands-on counseling and support
- A raise or bonus once you complete your coursework

The best teachers never stop learning. Continuing your education won't just help you be a better teacher, it can help you secure a better future. Early education teachers who earn a credential or a degree have higher job satisfaction and more job security. Through T.E.A.C.H. they also get paid a bonus.

Are there credentials or courses you must take, but just don't know where to start? Is there a degree program you want to pursue but wonder where you'll find the time? Our T.E.A.C.H. counselors are caring and skilled advisers who can help you put all the moving parts together.

Call 800-783-9322 (option 3) to learn more about our scholarship program, and the application process. There's no cost or obligation. You can even use our **free online cost calculator** to find out just how affordable going back to school can be <http://bit.ly/TEACHcost>





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Fun Fall Activities for Children

*Compiled by Supporting Families
Together Association*

Fall is a favorite season for many reasons. There's the apple picking (and eating!), the endless recipes made from hearty fall fare like squash, pumpkin, and sweet potatoes, and the satisfying *swish, crunch*, as you skid through a sidewalk flooded with fallen leaves. However, for young children, fall is more than just a beautiful season; it is a change in their world, as they know it. It is a chance for them to learn in a way that is new and interesting by incorporating learning into the seasonal changes around them.



Below are some ideas for fall learning so that you and the children in your life can get the most out of the season. For Wisconsin early educators, these activities fall within several domains of the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS) (<http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/wmels-about.php>).

Fall Arts, Crafts, & Sensory (Health/Physical Development)

- Apple Bowling Art (<http://www.messforless.net/?s=apple+bowling>)
- Pumpkin Guts Exploration (<http://www.stirthewonder.com/pumpkin-exploration/>)
- Cinnamon and Ginger Cloud Dough (<http://intheplayroom.co.uk/2014/09/17/sensory-play-cinnamon-ginger-cloud-dough/>)

The Science of Fall (Cognition/General Knowledge)

- Pumpkin-Cano (<http://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/pumpkin-cano-sensory-science-activity/>)
- Falling Leaf Art and Science (<http://www.fantasticfunandlearning.com/falling-leaf-art.html>)
- Exploring the Seeds of Fall (<http://www.teachpreschool.org/2012/09/exploring-the-seeds-of-fall-in-preschool/>)



Fall Math (Cognition/General Knowledge)

- Fall Acorn Activities (<http://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/acorn-fine-motor-fall-sensory-activities-math-science/>)
- Leaf Picking, Numbers Sorting, & Counting

<http://www.kidsplaybox.com/fall-themed-math-activities-for-kids/>)

- Fall Leaf Number Movement Game (<http://www.toddlerapproved.com/2013/09/fall-leaf-number-movement-game.html>)

Reading Into Fall (Language Development and Communications)
Read as a group, or leave the books out for children to explore.

- *Nuts to You!* by Lois Ehlert
- *Owl Babies* by Martin Waddell
- *I Love Fall!: A Touch-and-Feel Board Book* by Alison Inches



Fall Outdoor Action (Health/Physical Development)

- Fun Autumn Treasure Hunt (<http://innerchildfun.com/2009/10/fun-autumn-treasure-hunt.html>)
- Pumpkin Ring Toss (<http://innerchildfun.com/2009/09/pumpkin-ring-toss-game.html>)
- Take a Swim in Leaves (<http://www.firefliesandmudpies.com/2012/10/05/swimming-in-leaves/>)

Fall Cooking With Kids

Cooking with children teaches a multitude of things. There is math learned through measuring and timing, the sensory experience and scientific interaction of the ingredients, good nutrition, reading the words of the recipe; not to mention it is a great way to encourage family or classroom engagement. That means that these cooking activities, and any other healthy cooking with children, could fall into any—and likely all of—the domains.

- Cooking Applesauce With Kids (<http://www.findingtheteachablemoments.com/2013/10/cooking-with-kids-guide-to-teaching-by.html>)
- Cooking With Your Kids: Baked Apple Chips (<http://thefreckledhomeschooler.com/cooking-with-your-kids-baked-apple-chips/>)
- Pumpkin Jack-O-Lantern Pancakes (<http://artfulparent.com/2011/10/jack-o-lantern-pancakes-yum.html>)

Happy fall and happy learning!





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Grants Support Improvements in Credit Transfer Between 2-and 4-Year Colleges

Early childhood education students will complete courses more easily, bringing new skills to Wisconsin's youngest children.

Across Wisconsin, projects are underway that will streamline how early childhood education credits transfer between 2- and 4-year colleges and universities. The transfer agreements—also known as “articulation” agreements—will be strengthened between the schools in the University of Wisconsin System, the Wisconsin Technical College System and private colleges and universities.

“The more we work together to solve problems, the faster they will get solved and the better the outcomes. Articulation is a means to get the conversation going,” says Eloise Anderson, Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families. The Department is the primary funder of the grants.

Other fiscal partners include the University of Wisconsin’s Waisman Center, the Wisconsin Technical College System, and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. In total, 10 projects were granted funding to resolve key barriers to credit transfer.

In a collaboration between Lakeland College and MATC-Milwaukee for example, the number of credits that transfer to Lakeland will be maximized and graduate interns at Lakeland will work directly with MATC transfer students to help them prepare for teacher certification exams that include Praxis I, Praxis II (Praxis is the Core Academic Skills for Educators test) and Foundations of Reading.

“It’s exciting to see the collaboration between staff at the 2-year and 4-year schools and the new solutions that are emerging,” says Autumn Gehri, Director of Wisconsin’s T.E.A.C.H. program. “Moreover, each project will incorporate strategies that can be replicated elsewhere in the

Project Goal

Participating states will improve articulation of college coursework and early childhood education degrees from two-year institutions to four-year institutions within the state by identifying and implementing various strategies that either directly or indirectly affect the intended goal.



state,” she adds.

“Ongoing education is essential for the child care workforce to meet the needs of young children at a time when their brain development is at its most critical and fragile stage,” says Ruth Schmidt, Executive Director, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association. “The projects bring diverse educational institutions together to lower the barriers for students pursuing early childhood courses and degrees,” she says.

For over a decade, the T.E.A.C.H. program, funded by the Department of Children and

Families, has supported the child care workforce and raised teaching quality through subsidizing the costs of tuition, books, and time away from work for child care providers who want to improve their skills through college coursework, credentials, and degrees. For more information see www.wisconsinearlychildhood.org/teach

WECA is a statewide nonprofit organization for early childhood professionals. With offices in Madison and Milwaukee, WECA offers training, professional development, educational scholarships, a child nutrition program, and more. WECA calls for greater public investment in early education and promotes excellence in the child care profession. For more information visit www.wisconsinearlychildhood.org.

“The more we work together to solve problems, the faster they will get solved and the better the outcomes,” says Eloise Anderson, Secretary of DCF.



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Wisconsin's Training and Technical Assistance Professionals System



Wisconsin is launching a comprehensive effort towards a Training and Technical Assistance Professional (T-TAP) System. This T-TAP System will support the professionals who provide training and technical assistance (T-TA) to those who work directly with children and families.

The T-TAP System will be built upon the *Wisconsin T-TAP Competencies for Early Childhood and Related Professionals Working with Adults*, available on the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners website: <http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/professional-guidance-wi-t-tap-competencies.php>. T-TA Professionals benefit by having these statewide *T-TAP Competencies* that:

- Define the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to provide high-quality T-TA that supports the early childhood and school-age workforce.
- Outline best practices in training and various types of technical assistance, such as mentoring, coaching, consultation, professional development counseling, and peer-to-peer technical assistance.

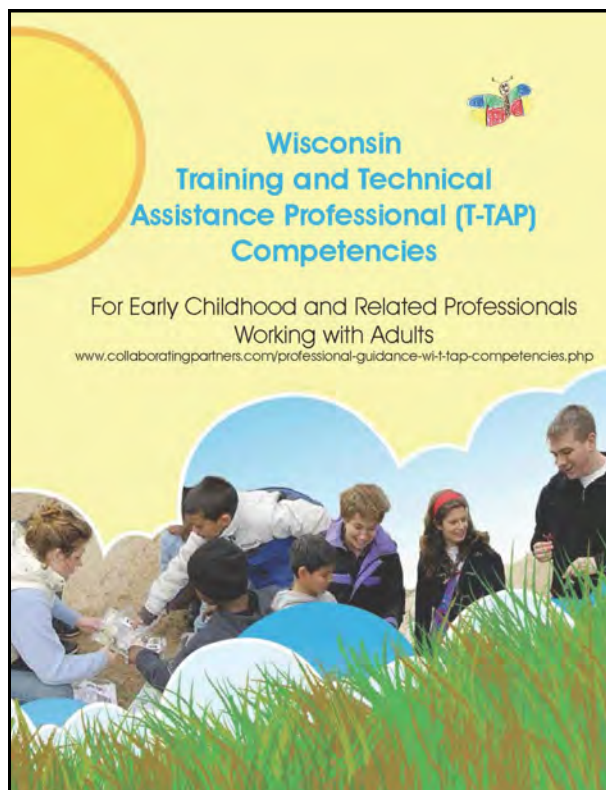
To further support the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of T-TA Professionals, three courses are being developed based upon the *Wisconsin T-TAP Competencies*:

- **Foundations Course:** A six-hour course for *both* Training Professionals and Technical Assistance Professionals. This course was piloted at a statewide session in May 2015, and feedback from that pilot is currently being used to enhance the course.

- **WI Trainer Course:** An additional 8-hour course (6-hour session + 2-hour homework) for Training Professionals. As homework, course participants will complete a training matrix that infuses strategies learned in the course and receive feedback from the course instructor.
- **WI Technical Assistance Course:** An additional 8-hour course (6-hour session + 2-hour homework) for Technical Assistance Professionals. As homework, course participants will complete a reflective professional development plan and receive feedback from the course instructor.

These courses will ask participants to explore the *art* and the *science* of T-TA. T-TA Professionals must have knowledge of the *science* behind T-TA, such as adult learning theory, how best to organize goals and objectives, and how to develop professional relationships. T-TA Professionals must also have the skills and dispositions to apply those theories and develop relationships of respect and trust; this is the *art*.

When these courses are complete, they will be part of The Registry's Professional Development Approval System (PDAS, at <https://www.the-registry.org/PDAS/Overview.aspx>) and may be required by some organizations in Wisconsin that employ T-TA Professionals. These courses are replacing the previous Adult Learner and Consultant courses which set the foundation for these continued efforts. It is strongly encouraged that T-TA Professionals complete the new T-TAP courses as they have been designed to highlight the latest evidence-based practices and feature a collaborative approach to professional development in Wisconsin.





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New Provider and Family Resources for Children with Special Needs and Disabilities



As families of children with special needs and disabilities begin to search for child care, both the family and child care providers may have concerns or questions about meeting the child's individual needs. Though this is true for all families, often these concerns are greater for families of children with special needs.

We are excited to announce a brand new resource and tool to help both families and providers navigate inclusion topics and the inclusion of all children in child care: the YoungStar Early Childhood Inclusion web pages!
<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/eci/default.htm>



A key to educational and life-long success is being educated with typically developing peers. Child care providers who offer quality care in an inclusive environment create a solid foundation for the success of all children.

At the Department of Children and Families (DCF), we want all child care programs to feel confident in the quality of care provided to children with special needs and disabilities.

Visit and explore the YoungStar Early Childhood Inclusion web pages today. These brand new pages provide helpful tips and resources for all child care providers and families.
<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/eci/default.htm>

Infant Toddler Commission at MATC



On May 30, 2015 nearly 60 child care providers from 2 and 3 Star-rated YoungStar programs in the Milwaukee area participated in a Registry Commission for the Infant Toddler Credential at Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC). MATC was able to offer the four courses (12 credits) at no cost to the child care providers because of the Educational Opportunities Grant. Courses were offered to cohorts of students at locations throughout the community, in both English and Spanish. MATC plans to offer the Preschool Credential in the fall, offering courses in English, Spanish, and Hmong as part of the Educational Opportunities Grant.

Looking for Training or Conferences?

Your opportunity for professional development is available from multiple agencies who offer state-wide training and professional development/trainings for child care providers in all age groups. Just click on the link and information (if available) will be provided for you to plan which conference you would like to attend.

Statewide organizations

SFTA Professional Development Calendar

<http://supportingfamilies.together.org/wp-content/uploads/Annual-Training-Calendar.pdf>

WECA professional development

<http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/training/>

The Registry <https://www.the-registry.org/myregistry/>

Upcoming Association Conferences

Pathways to Quality Conference and Resource Fair November 7, 2015 (Milwaukee providers)

<http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/pathways/>

Wisconsin Child Care Administrator's Association Conference: Feb. 17-19, 2016

<http://www.wccaa.org/conference/2015-conference/>

Wisconsin Family Child Care Association

<http://www.wisconsinfamilychildcare.org/conference>

Wisconsin Afterschool Association

<http://waaweb.org/annual-conference.html>

